



Wilson's Creek National Battlefield • Missouri

DECEMBER 2006, D-74



Civil War Museum

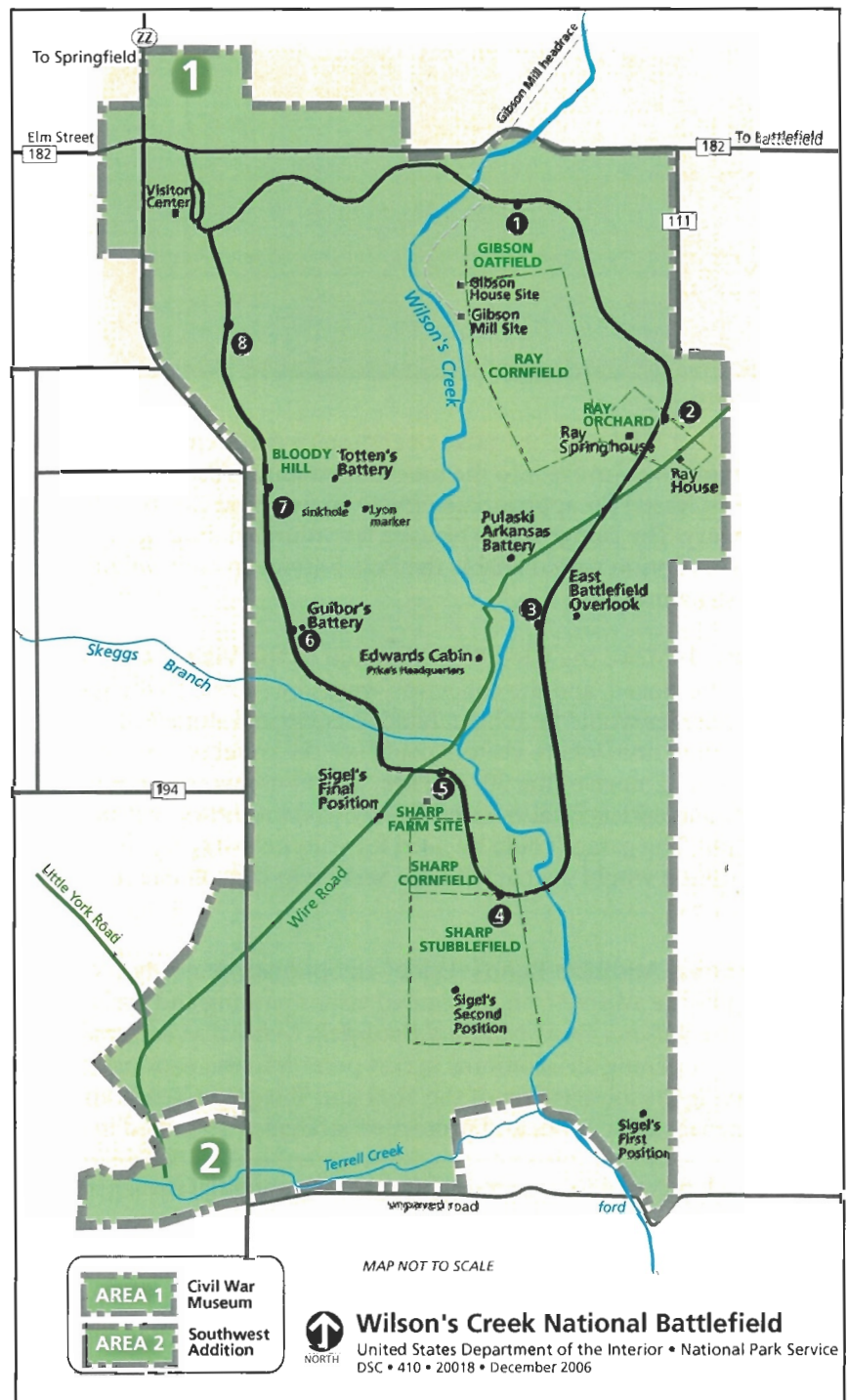
Dear Friend of Wilson's Creek,

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield has initiated an amendment of its general management plan, which was completed in 2003. As you may know, the approved general management plan included an expansion of the national battlefield boundaries. Among the areas acquired as a result of this boundary expansion were the 20-acre site that is home to the Civil War Museum, formerly known as General Sweeney's Museum of Civil War History, and a 150-acre parcel adjacent to the battlefield's southwest boundary. The Civil War Museum contains one of the nation's finest Trans-Mississippi collections on the Civil War. Ensuring the long-term protection of this outstanding collection is one of the primary objectives of this new planning process.

As we begin to plan in more detail for the future use of these new areas, it is important to share ideas with the public and hear your thoughts on the best way to manage and protect these added resources. National battlefield staff have been working with a team of planning professionals to develop some preliminary management options for these areas. We have outlined these options below for your review and comment. Your thoughts will help us refine these options and develop management alternatives, including the National Park Service's (NPS) preferred management alternative. These alternatives and any potential impacts of implementing these alternatives will be presented in a more detailed *Draft General Management Plan Amendment / Environmental Assessment*, which will be made available for public review and comment.

The preliminary three management options are as follows:

Option 1: Continuation of Existing Conditions. Under the no-action alternative, the national battlefield interpretation, exhibit, and storage of the Civil War collection would remain at the museum in its current location. The visitor





The house

experience at the battlefield would be divided between the Civil War Museum and the battlefield at the main unit. Most NPS administrative functions would remain at the main unit. A certain amount of staff time would be dedicated to the operation of the museum. The garage and outbuilding on this site would be used for storage.

Option 2: Move the Civil War Museum to a New Building. Under this alternative, the Civil War Museum would be closed and the collection would be moved to a new curatorial and exhibit building at the main unit adjacent to the visitor center and library. The visitor experience would be focused at the main unit, where visitors could see portions of the collection on exhibit and experience the battle-

field. Most NPS administrative operations would remain at the main unit. However, the inventory and monitoring program would move into the museum building. Also, the house on the 20-acre site (see above) would be rehabilitated to be leased for appropriate private commercial use, or sold and moved to a new location outside the battlefield boundary. The garage could be used for volunteer staging and storage, and the outbuilding would be used for storage. This option would enable the Park Service to consolidate some current operations and reduce the number of NPS structures.

Option 3: Move the Civil War Museum to the Visitor Center. Under this alternative, the Civil War Museum would be closed, and the collection would be moved to the visitor center. The existing administrative space in the visitor center would be rehabilitated as curatorial storage and exhibit space. The visitor experience would be focused at the main unit, where visitors could see the collection and experience the battlefield. Most administrative operations would move to the 20-acre site. The house would be rehabilitated as the new NPS headquarters/administrative center and educational/training facility. The inventory and monitoring program would move into the former museum building. The garage could be used for volunteer staging and storage, and the outbuilding would be used for storage. This option would enable the Park Service to consolidate most of its current operations in a smaller number of structures.

Southwest Addition Lands: Under all options, the newly acquired lands on the southwest boundary would be managed like the adjacent lands. Limited visitor parking and trails could be developed. However, to maintain consistency with the *Wilson's Creek National Battlefield General Management Plan*, limited trails would be developed at the site without opening an additional access point into the national battlefield. Sensitive cultural and natural resources, including the intersection of the York and Telegraph Roads and the battlefield landscape, would be protected using the management zones and protection strategies described in the general management plan.

We look forward to your thoughts on these potential management directions for Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

Please send us your comments at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

Select Wilson's Creek NB from the drop-down list and then select General Management Plan Amendment.

You may also contact me directly at 417-732-2662 or at T_John_Hillmer@nps.gov.

You can also send a letter to: Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

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Thank you for your interest in the National Park Service and Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

Sincerely,

Ted Hillmer

Superintendent

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield